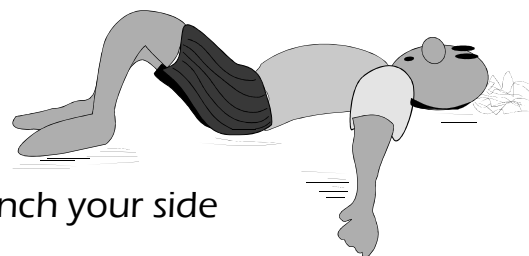


Recommended Stretches

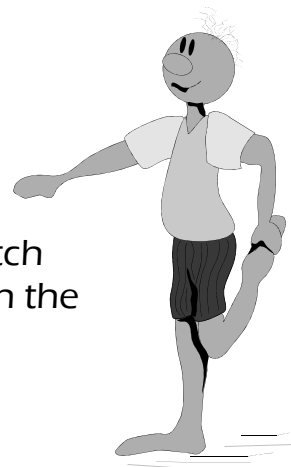


The Twister — Lie on your back with your arms out. Head faces one way, bent legs go the other way (keeping knees together). Now change directions of head and legs. Keep doing this, maintaining a fluid motion (like a metronome). Advanced technique: Try it with legs crossed.



The Hula — Lie on your back with your knees bent. Scrunch your side to draw one hip up, then the other.

Hop-a-long — Stand on one leg and grab your foot behind you. Stretch leg with toes pointing straight back, then out. Try it by grabbing with the opposite hand and your toes pointing in.



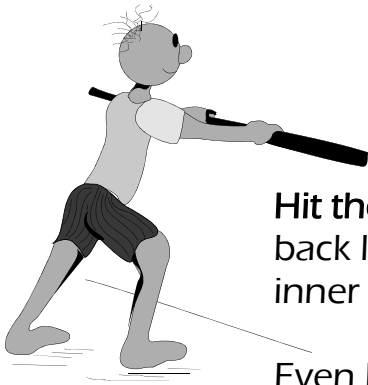
Hurdler Stretch — Sit with one leg bent behind you and the other leg straight out in front of you. Stretch over the front leg, keeping your back straight or even arched.

Modified Hurdler Stretch — Almost the same position, but your front leg is bent at a 90° angle in front of you. If this seems easy, bend inwards, closer to your foot.



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Hit the Wall — Stand with hands on the wall. Front leg is bent and back leg is straight. Back leg holds your weight. Stretch. To stretch inner calf, try it with back leg bent.

Even better — hit the steps! Stand on the edge of a step and allow your heel to drop over the edge. Drop hips and slowly bend knee until it's over your toes.

The Wishbone — Sit with legs spread apart. First you stretch between legs. Then cross your right hand to your left foot and stretch. Now the other way. Slow and steady.



Reach for the Sky (psoas stretch) — Your back knee should be behind your hips and your front leg is bent. Reach straight up to the ceiling with the arm that corresponds with your back leg.

Pretzel Stretch (not pictured) — Sit on the floor with your legs crossed like you did in kindergarten. Bend at the waist and stretch both arms forward.

Muscles don't really stretch, they only relax one fiber at a time — hence they elongate. You can't force a muscle to relax any more than you can force yourself to sleep.

Rules:

- Forget the old techniques of bouncing and forcing stretches.
- Breathe, relax and have patience.
- Go to the stretch point (no pain), wait and breathe. As it releases, move to the next stretch point and repeat.